



DEVIL IN DANNY!

lived together for eight years before getting married), and was given a grant from the American Film Institute to continue film-making. Then he was cast in *Taxi* in 1979.

"*Taxi* forced me to go off in a different direction and just act," he recalls.

"I'm glad it's evolving this way that I finally get to direct also."

Danny and Rhea manage to look after their blossoming careers while remaining devoted parents to Lucy, 6, Tracey, 4, and Jacob, 2.

But Danny is the first to admit that staying happily married takes a lot of work.

"Working on *War Of The Roses* is an irony because it's a movie about looking up from the grindstone to see what you've got," he says.

"And here I am spending a year and a half, day-in day-out, making a movie about not working so hard

and taking care of a relationship!

"I'll always look at the film as a cautionary tale because I'd never want anything like this to happen to me." He leans forward with a conspiratorial wink and adds: "And I had a chandelier that I got rid of straight after the movie!"

*From Jenny Cooney
in Los Angeles*

DeVito might be short but his reputation is huge

HE'S only 152cm short, but devilish Danny DeVito can stand tall when it comes to reputations.

Despite his "non-leading man" looks, the star proudly boasts that, for the past three years, his movies *Throw Momma From The Train*, *Twins* and his newest film, *War Of The Roses*, all held the number one spot.

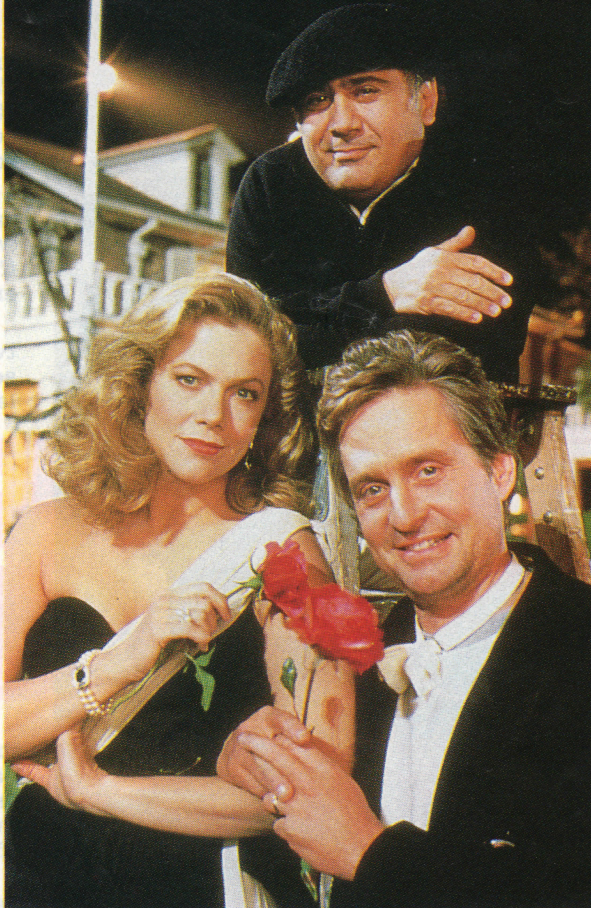
"I'm not trying to blow my own trumpet here," the feisty 45-year-old says with a grin, "but just for the record I thought I'd throw that in!"

For an actor who's been described as "a human grenade who's just had his pin pulled", it seems appropriate that Danny's *War Of The Roses* is a wicked comedy starring Michael Douglas and Kathleen Turner as Oliver and Barbara Rose, an adoring couple whose marriage has gone sour — so sour their home becomes a battleground.

"I take 'em from *Wuthering Heights* to *Full Metal Jacket*," Danny quips. He directed the film, which grossed more than \$90 million in four weeks in the U.S., and also plays Oliver's lawyer Gavin DeMato, who narrates the saga.

"Love turned to hate is a strong theme and it was also a very funny screenplay," Danny says. "The fact that the theme was so dark was also attractive to me."

Danny has an evil grin when asked about the scenes where the Roses are stuck high above the floor in a chandelier.



● Diminutive Danny DeVito stars with, and directs, Kathleen Turner and Michael Douglas in *War Of The Roses*

"The chandelier scene was difficult to film but it was a very joyous experience for me to grease Michael and Kathleen up there and hang them 11 metres in the air.

"After what Michael put us through in the jungle for *Romancing*

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The Stone," Danny adds with a chuckle, "I got them up there, turned to the rest of the company and called 'lunch' and told Michael, 'This is payback time, baby!'"

While Danny is a devoted husband (married to Cheers star Rhea Perlman for three years and father of three) and, according to close friend Michael Douglas, the best buddy a guy could have, on-screen he is devilish.

He played a swindler in *Ruthless People*, a conniving sleazeball in *Twins*, a con-man in *Tin Men*, and he was a bad-guy in the long-running TV series *Taxi* as the sadistic dispatcher Louie De Palma.

All the characters are motivated by money.

"Well, I guess there was a certain amount of greed in Louie, and Sam in *Ruthless People* was money-oriented, and Tilly in *Tin Men* also needed to make big bucks," he says.

"Of course, in *Twins* the \$5 million played a big part, so I guess there's a theme of buckaroos running through my pictures!

"Maybe some day, if I lay down on the sofa and talk to a psychiatrist, it will all come to the surface that my great desire in life is to become Malcolm Forbes (one of the world's richest men)," he adds jokingly.

Although Danny is one of the most

THE



sought-after actors — and directors — in Hollywood, he admits he was always nervous about his looks getting in the way.

"I thought that I could be an actor but I never admitted it to anyone," he says.

"Here I was, this little character living in New Jersey. I'm not Clark Gable and I could never admit to my friends that some day I wanted to be on that screen, because they'd laugh me out of the state!

"But I wasn't aiming to go to the London Shakespeare Festival and be a stage actor, because my heart was always in movies."

Unsure of his on-screen potential, Danny threw himself into directing, shooting on 16mm film with Rhea, his girlfriend at the time (the pair